



**THE HISTORY CHANNEL® PRESENTS:
The Revolution: Declaring Independence
Part 3 of a 13 part original series**

The American Revolution laid the foundation for the success of the United States, yet the viability of the nation was not always imminent and the quest for liberty was no simple endeavor. As the Colonists found themselves becoming increasingly independent, the fiercest and most powerful army in the world stood between them and a free, independent, sovereign America. Small skirmishes between colonists and representatives of the British throne escalated in 1775. In order to pacify what he viewed as a small rebellion, the King sent a contingent of Red Coats from the seemingly omnipotent British Army across the Atlantic Ocean. However, as the days and months progressed, the Red Coats, their military leaders and King George III himself eventually realized the ferocity, courage and collective will of the colonists they faced. A Revolution was underway.

The Revolution: Declaring Independence explains the early struggles of the once proud Continental Army. The year 1776 brings with it the noble ideas and dreams of independence as America is born. However, dark, devastating struggles quickly challenge these hopes, as the British finally launch a large-scale offensive, leaving few in the colonies to believe that their glorious cause for liberty will survive. However, a glimmer of hope arises from the Battle of New York, as Washington escaped what many thought would be imminent capture as the English surrounded him overnight. But with the help of fate and its dense fog, Washington and his men were able to vanish from the clutches of British forces and carry on their quest for liberty.

Curriculum Links

The Revolution: Declaring Independence would be useful for high school and middle school classes on United States History, Military History, European History, and Colonial History. Teachers may want to use clips from this series to animate their lesson plans and course units, or chose individual episodes from this series to highlight a particular chapter in the Revolutionary era. This documentary fulfills several National Standards guidelines as outlined by the National Council for History Education including: (1)

Values, Beliefs, Political Ideas and Institutions, (2) Conflict and Cooperation, (3) Patterns of Social and Political Interaction and (4) Comparative History of Major Developments.

Vocabulary

Using the dictionary at www.merriamwebster.com, an internet resource such as www.history.com, or an encyclopedia, students should define or explain the significance of the following terms:

Absolve
Aurora
Flotilla
Inauspicious
Insolence

Rebuke
Supplant
Treason
Urban Warfare
Writhing

American Revolution Facts

DID YOU KNOW that Thomas Paine donated all the proceeds *Common Sense* to the patriot cause?

WERE YOU AWARE that the Turtle, America's first submarine, submerged by taking on water into the passenger compartment and then on ascent, the operator had to hand pump the water back out of the cabin?

IT IS SURPRISING that General William Howe was actually King George III's illegitimate uncle. This is the case because Howe's grandmother had been King George I's mistress and had offspring.

Comprehension Questions

1. Who was Thomas Paine? What were his contributions to the patriot cause? Why was *Common Sense* so influential and widely disseminated throughout the colonies?
2. What did the British fleet look like to the patriots as it approached New York's harbor? What was the point of this dramatic entrance?
3. What was General Howe's strategy in the Battle of New York? How effective was his strategy? Did General Washington have an efficient plan of action as well?
4. Why do you think the producers of the show documented a minor character like Lieutenant Joseph Hodgkins? What does the Lieutenant's story personify about the sacrifice made by the patriots?
5. How did General Washington facilitate the escape of his troops from New York City? Do you believe that fate was on his side? What do you think was the

reaction of the British troops? What was so significant about General Washington's escape?

Extended Activities

Designing Your Own Battle Plan

General Washington was lucky enough to escape from a dominant English victory in the Battle of New York. While the Continental Army lost the battle miserably, it escaped complete annihilation and was able to continue forward in the war. Either in groups of 3-5 or on your own, design your own battle plan for the Revolutionary War. Your plan should include key supply routes, locations of battles, troop movements and overall goals for your army. Be sure to explain the practicality of your plan as well as the political and social ramifications of your strategy. When all your investigative and creative work is finished, share your ideas with the class in a PowerPoint presentation that explains your thoughts clearly.

General Resources

The Complete History of the American Revolution and the Revolutionary War:

www.americanrevolution.com/Links.htm

Emory University's website with primary sources including documents, paintings and speeches regarding the American Revolution:

<http://www.law.emory.edu/FEDERAL/compict.html#const>

Maps from the Revolutionary War era:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/gmdhtml/armhtml/armhome.html>

Military Resources on the American Revolution including digitized photographs of original paintings and drawings of battles:

<http://www.archives.gov/research/american-revolution/pictures/index.html>

Online Resources for *Declaring Independence*

A Biography of Thomas Paine

<http://www.ushistory.org/paine/>

A biography of Sir William Howe

http://www.earlyamerica.com/review/2001_winter_spring/howe_1.html

A guide to *Common Sense*

<http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/>

The Official White House biography of President John Adams

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/ja2.html>

A walking tour of the Battle of New York

http://www.thebattlefornewyork.com/walking_tour.php

Books and other Resources for *Declaring Independence*

A Naval History of the American Revolution. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1913. 2 volumes.

James, William M. *The British Navy in Adversity: A Study of the War of American Independence*. London: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1926.

McCullough, David. *1776*. Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Tilley, John A. *The British Navy and the American Revolution*. University of South Carolina Press, 1987.

Stout, Neil R. *The Royal Navy in America, 1760-1775: A Study of Enforcement of British Colonial Policy in the Era of the American Revolution*. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1973.

U.S. Library of Congress. *Naval Records of the American Revolution, 1775-1788*